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ABSTRACT

Early in January 1994, more than 70 University of Colorado faculty, including all of the deans, asked president Judith Albino to resign. Albino, however, refused to resign, and later, the Board of regents voted 5-4 to turn down the resolution demanding her resignation; it also ordered a review of Albino's tenure as chief administrator. A study examined the coverage of the gender-based issues of the Albino controversy in seven issues of the three major newspapers in the Boulder-Denver area: the "Rocky-Mountain News," the "Denver Post," and the "Daily Camera." A discursive and nondiscursive analysis of articles in these papers showed that gender was not defined as a key issue in the news discourse. Only the "News" allotted a separate news story which suggested gender as an issue within the story, although the claim was refuted and dismissed rather than investigated. The "Post" failed to even print State Representative Vi June's charges that Albino was asked to resign because of gender-based biases. Further, each time gender became an issue in the newspapers, it was introduced and discussed by women, suggesting that news agencies continue to see gender as a "women's issue." The study's central finding, that gender, when not investigated directly, enters the news discourse through the back door, confirms much research already done on women and journalism. Gender is not a category overtly explored in the analysis of power and politics in the news. (Contains 25 references.) (TB)

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ED 375 411

# The Removal of Gender from the News Agenda:

## a Case Study

by

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**The Removal of Gender from the News Agenda:**
**a Case Study**

--Abstract--

The issue of the call for resignation of University of Colorado President Judith Albino provides a case for the analysis of sexual politics in media discourse. This study looks at local newspaper coverage of the events and investigates the ways in which the claim of gender bias is both dismissed within the discursive news texts and reworked into the news discourse through the non-discursive elements of headlines and photographs.

## The Removal of Gender from the News Agenda: a Case Study

Introduction

According to Kate Millett (1970), "sex is a status category with political implications." Millett uses the term "sexual politics" to describe the part gender plays in the structuring of power in a society, noting that in a patriarchal system, males are assumed (by natural law) to be in a place of authority over females. If one accepts Millett's premise that gender is a factor in the power distribution within society, it would seem plausible that interactions between men and women might reflect that power differential.

In an ideal situation, then, news discourse which sought to analyze relationships of power and politics might be expected to examine - or at least mention - gender as a possible source of power differential.

Yet gender is often not a category explored in the analysis of power and politics in the news. This may be the case for several reasons. First, on the level of interpersonal interaction, the specific role gender plays in the power distribution is often difficult to distinguish from other factors of the relationship which influence power distribution, such as professional status, levels of influence outside the relationship, or group memberships such as race, class, sexual preference, etc.. Second - and this further complicates the matter - discrimination against women often occurs within the bounds of what appears "natural" in the ideology of the patriarchy. Because ideology best functions when it is invisible, the naming of gender as an issue threatens to upset the system through its exposure of inequities. One line of defense is to render the naming of gender an issue that is petty, irrelevant, or "political" (in the sense of introducing a bias to the story). These factors

operate to make gender an issue that is not "newsworthy" as an explanation for a power differential in relationships.

Because the mass media are often charged with the analysis of situations involving power and politics, they are logical sites for an analysis that examines gender issues. This study considers an instance in which news accounts of power and politics failed to adequately examine the role of gender in the story. It investigates the way in which the news discourse evolved in three local newspapers, comparing and contrasting the story construction of a single issue. By examining the way in which gender is removed from the news agenda in the constructions of this story, we might learn something about the way in which news functions within a patriarchy to stifle gender as a factor of power differential.

## Literature Review

Pertinent to the issue of the removal of gender from the news agenda are two major strands of literature: the construction of news as a discourse and the representation of women in the mass media. The specific case study of Judith Albino necessitates an exploration of the role of women in higher education, which will be examined first.

### *Women in Higher Education*

While statistics demonstrate that the proportion of women in higher education administration has increased over the past twenty-five years, there are still few women who are in top positions (Howard, 1978; Kaplan and Tinsley, 1989). In the late 1980s, less than 8% of all colleges and universities employed women as presidents or chancellors (Kaplan and Tinsley, 1989; American Council on Education, 1989). Women in higher education administration tends to be clustered in the lower ranks.

Etaugh (1985) found that most women presidents are in private, four year colleges. Her research confirms that women are underrepresented in the top positions of public coeducational institutions. Similarly, Green and her colleagues (1988) described the typical college president of

1988 as white, male, fifty-three years old, married, and with seven years of prior experience in the position. Green's findings are rather dismal: for both faculty and administration, there are pronounced differences along gender lines with regard to salary, rank, tenure, and position. She found no evidence that gender-related differences had diminished in the previous ten years.

Several researchers have enumerated the obstacles facing women aspiring for top positions. Churgin (1978) lamented the perception that women who have accepted these positions forfeit chances at happiness and success. He wrote, "Suspected by all, supported by few, the task of a woman in administration is not an enviable one." Kaplan and Tinsley (1989) cited lack of experience, lack of education, personal and family responsibilities, and lack of mobility as the primary challenges facing these aspiring women.

In contrast to these views, however, Mann and Smith (1990) emphasized that reasons for the low numbers of women in higher positions of administration should be understood systemically rather than as related to individual traits or qualifications. Consistent with this claim, the American Human Management Association (1992) revealed that the costs of systemic gender bias to an organization amounted to approximately $15.3 million for one Fortune 500 company with 27,000 employees. One source of this loss was the higher turnover rate of women employees. In 1988, 74% of managers and 70% of all employees who left the company were women. A similar study on gender bias conducted by the Department of Labor (1992) found that women represented only 1% to 2% of senior executive officials. Kenner-Varner (1992) noted that relationships between those hiring and the candidate were key in the hiring process:

> When you're talking about a six-figure salary -- a position in which key decisions are made -- skills and competency aren't the issue...the issue of relationship comes into play. Executives choose a candidate with whom they feel comfortable and can associate outside of work...I think gender bias is disappearing from entry-level and mid-management positions, perhaps just because there are so many women in those positions now, but the problem seems to be increasing in upper management. There are fewer women at that level, so fewer men are used to working with them.

Similarly, Taylor (1989) noted that part of the responsibility for overcoming these challenges lies with the intentionality of the university's search committee. In addition to the need for intentional recruitment practices, she acknowledged subtle forms of discrimination. For

example, she pointed out that search committee members are unconsciously drawn to individuals who remind them of themselves. Since most search committees are comprised of male members, male applicants may have an unfair, unconscious advantage.

Many researchers of higher education have analyzed the way in which power is structured in relationships with regard to gender (see, e.g., Grover, 1992; Astin and Leland, 1991). As Harris (1974) noted, "The reality still is that women are excellent students at universities but are seldom teachers or administrators because of some vague sense of their unsuitability."

As one of few women in the upper eschelons of higher education, then, Judith Albino is a newsmaker whose work has served as a focal point for news discourse. This discourse provides an interesting site for the analysis of gender in news coverage.

*News as discourse*

Fiske (1987) defined discourse as a "socially developed system of representation." He noted that discourse serves to create and circulate a coherent set of meanings about an important issue.

As a social phenomenon, discourse serves as a frame for reality so that individuals can make sense of their social experience. In this sense, discourse functions in a way similar to ideology; it maintains the distribution of power by ruling out alternative ways of thinking. Discourse can serve to oppose or support the dominant ideology. In fact, contradictory discourses often exist simultaneously, allowing different groups within a culture to maintain differing understandings of social experience.

Fiske pointed out that discourses become institutionalized through the media industry and the consumers of media products. Discourses are not produced by individuals; therefore one cannot credit (or blame) reporters with the creation of a discourse. As newspaper reporters seek to place their stories in a frame that will be meaningful for their readers, they tap into discursive meanings that existed before the discourse was spoken by any individual.

In Foucault's work, discourse was inseparable from power because discourses are produced within a world of power relations and serve to reinforce and naturalize certain views. Claims of objectivity, therefore, are spurious; there are no 'true' discourses, only more or less powerful ones:

> What counts in the things said by men is not so much what they have thought or the extent to which these things represent their thoughts, as that which systemizes them from the outset, thus making them thereafter endlessly accessible to new discourses and open to the task of transforming them. (Foucault, 1975, p. xiv)

The fact that newspaper reporters are able to frame their story within certain discourses while ignoring others gives reporters the power to reinforce certain views. Thus, according to Tuchman (1978a), news organizations not only circulate but also shape knowledge. She noted that the construction of news is both a social and institutional method of making information available to consumers. It is social because it incorporates the views of the readers so as to encourage their continued participation; it is institutional as newsworkers draw upon particular practices in their work. Tuchman (1978a) noted that reporters seek to be "objective" by accepting the "web of facticity" of news. The fact that the news seeks to be "objective" masks the fact that certain ways of viewing reality are naturalized while others are ignored:

> One may conclude that the news net not only excludes some occurrences from consideration as news because of a pattern of centralization at legitimated institutions; it also orders priorities by which sort of employee or service produced an item, reporter or stringer, staff or Associated press reporter. ..In the act of judging the relative value of diverse items caught in the news net, the editors perpetually create and recreate negotiated standards of judgment. By accomplishing judgments, the editors in turn affirm and reaffirm the validity of the anchoring of the news net as a frame imposing order and coherence on the social world. (Tuchman, 1978a,p. 37-38)

Tuchman pointed out that to be considered as a news item, an occurrence or issue must resonate with either a reporter's or a news organization's sense of what is important and relevant.

The discourse of gender is not peculiar to news--it is pervasive at all levels of lived and mediated social experience, yet there are no institutions which examine and accept responsibility for the discourse. In fact, individuals may avoid participating in the discourse because it is problematic to the discourses that better serve their interests. Foucault's description of a panopticon is illustrative of the role of the press in this practice of overlooking gender. A

panopticon is an aerial structure in the middle of a prison ground. It offers a panoptical view of the prison environment and functions like a two-way mirror. Foucault contended that because prisoners could unknowingly be watched at any time, they learn to regulate their own behavior (1979). Like the prisoners beneath a panopticon, newsmakers may be careful to avoid discussing gender because it could be observed by the press and become a part of the legitimated discourse.

Similarly, Tuchman (1978a) described the role of ideology in discourse as the prevention of knowledge by the closing off of an analytic inquiry. In this sense, power is a constraining rather than a creative force.

*Women as Subjects in News Stories*

Tuchman (1978b) presented two key concepts in approaching the study of representation of women in mass mediated imagery: symbolic annihilation and the reflection hypothesis. Symbolic annihilation refers to the absence, trivialization, or condemnation of women and other subordinated groups in media content. Tuchman decried the symbolic annihilation of women in the media as the source of an ever-increasing culture lag between representation and reality.

As examples of the symbolic annihilation of women in the mass media, consider the following two studies. As part of his larger study of images of men and women in television, Gerbner (1993) addressed the issue of men and women as both producers and subjects of news. The study demonstrated that nearly two-thirds of news deliverers are male, 80% of cited authorities are male, and 82% of newsmakers are male. A similar study commissioned by Betty Friedan's media watchdog group "Women, Men, and Media" and the American Society of Newspaper Editors (1990) looked at women as subjects and producers of front-page news stories. The study found that women were featured in 32% of front-page photos, represented only 14% of quoted news sources, and were credited with only 28% of the bylines.

Tuchman's reflection hypothesis asserts that the mass media reflect dominant societal values, passing on deeply sexist heritages in order to secure the transmission of these values. Kuhn (1982) affirmed the reflection hypothesis, noting that challenges to the prevailing values often emerge from the mediated text in the form of a "rupture." She noted that discontinuities,

such as inconsistencies between narrative and the images that accompany it, serve to make visible the challenges that are being masked in order to preserve the dominant values.

Fiske (1987) linked the underrepresentation of women in news to their lack of representation in the public sphere. The need for news to solicit expert and authority opinion limits news production to the domain of the elite and the rulers--in other words, to men.

Pingree and Hawkins (1978) suggested that reporters are subject to the same sex-role stereotypes that impact their public audiences and posited that news production has its own institutional biases. As an example, Tuchman (1987) chronicled the advent of women's pages in daily newspapers and the way in which the content of such pages is driven as much by stereotypes as it is by reader interest.

Rakow and Kranich's (1991) study of national evening news stories examined those stories in which women were likely to be significant to the meaning of the story. The study illustrated that women are more likely to be the carriers rather than the creators of meaning--that is, women as newsmakers are perceived first as women, and only secondarily in their specific newsmaking roles. They noted that women subjects in the news are also seen as representing their entire sex--they are shorthanded abstractions, or signs. Additionally, women do not speak for other women. On the occasion that they do, they are perceived as "feminists."

Bybee (1990) noted that contemporary feminist, political, and discourse theories see power as inseparable from the production of knowledge. Thus, for Bybee, the issue of authority in news and news sources necessarily becomes an issue of power. Bybee asserted that advances in the understanding and conceptualization of power have seldom been applied to the investigation of news and gender. For this reason, the case study of Judith Albino is particularly pertinent.

## Case Study Background

Early in January 1994, University of Colorado president Judith Albino was asked to resign from her position. The call for her resignation came in the form of a letter signed by more than 70 of the university's faculty members, including all of the academic deans. This call echoed a

December "no-confidence" vote from three of the university's nine-member Board of Regents. Each group cited ineffective leadership as motivating the request for Albino to step down.

Albino refused to resign. The faculty then took their grievances to the Board of Regents. The Board, in turn, voted 5-4 to turn down the joint faculty and dean resolution demanding her resignation and voted for a review of Albino with a final report to be completed by August 1994.

Method

The *Rocky Mountain News* , the *Denver Post* and the *Daily Camera* are the largest daily newspapers serving the Boulder-Denver area. The content of each paper has been analyzed to reveal the degree to which gender is addressed directly or indirectly in the call for Albino's resignation. An ideological and semiotic analysis is employed to examine the signs used to define the story as well as the codes which relate the signs. Codes guide the selection and combination of the signs and are intertextual in that they refer to preestablished codes outside the text.

While it can be argued that the controversy began long before the official call for Albino's resignation and continues after the Regents' vote of support, we have limited our study to the one-week interval marked by these two events. We have focused on the week of Saturday January 15 through Friday January 21, because we contend that the discourses surrounding the controversy were first articulated during this time. We have also chosen to limit the study to print journalism, as the three papers provide ample opportunity for comparison of coverage.

The categories of analysis included in this study are discursive and non-discursive elements. The discursive elements include:

A) The extent to which news discourse posits gender as a key issue;

B) Instances where gender is introduced into the discourse through the use of gender specific categories;

The non-discursive elements include:

A) Headline analysis--or how headlines position key players;

B) Image analysis--visual portrayal of men and women.

In sum, by addressing the multiple levels of meaning production and the ways in which those levels interact, the privileging of speakers, and the privileged meanings embedded in the text, our categories of analysis address Bybee's (1990) suggested strategy for research into the symbolic annihilation of women.

Findings

I. *Discursive analysis: Gender as a key issue*

There were no stories or editorials in the *Denver Post* sample that either posited or refuted the crisis as a gender issue.

The *Rocky Mountain News* (1/20) offered a brief story on the possibility of gender as a factor in the call for Albino's resignation, while the *Daily Camera* (1/20) included a reference to gender within the day's news article on the situation. Each of these pieces included this quote from State Representative Vi June: "I wonder if Judith Albino would be in as much trouble if her name was John Albino...I think [it's] easier to challenge her because she is a woman." Both papers contained Regent Kathy Arnold's response to June: "Because I took the position I did (in challenging Albino), that doesn't mean that I, as a woman, am anti-woman."

In the *News*, in addition to this cite within the article, June's quote serves as a visual to the story, as it is enlarged and constitutes nearly one-third of the space given to the story. The *Camera* included June's quote within the larger context of that day's regents meeting, and therefore gender was not the primary focus of the story.

Two letters to the editor of the *Daily Camera* focused on the issue of gender. The first letter (1/17), from a woman, claimed that Albino was being held to a higher standard because she was a woman. Headlined "Gender isn't major factor," the second letter (1/21) was written by three distinguished female professors seeking to refute the gender bias claimed in the first. The problem, according to the three women, was not gender related; rather, it was one of ineffective leadership.

*Discursive analysis: Gender introduced indirectly*

In addition to these direct references to gender in news stories and editorials, several stories referred to the gender or gender roles of the actors. Discussions centering on Albino's husband could be considered stories related to gender roles, for example. "Sal Albino fights to save wife's job," and "CU chief's husband calls for healing," were the story headlines in the January 17 *Rocky Mountain News*. The story behind the headlines related that Sal Albino made several calls to faculty members asking for peace.

The *Daily Camera* also contained a story about Albino's husband Sal (1/18). Querying his function within the university and his salary status, the story revealed that he is unpaid, noting that he is only listed as a university employee so that he can ride a university lawnmower and drive his wife to functions in a university insured car.

In addition to these indirect references to gender, several newsmakers used gendered descriptors to discuss the situation. The *News* quoted two newsmakers who referred to leadership as a male-gendered activity - one described bullying techniques and another used "good-old boy" as a descriptor for a style of leadership. Regent Norwood Robb, an Albino supporter, described the tactics of Albino's opponents: "[the deans and faculty leaders] have a proven track record of management by intimidation" (1/20). In the same story Regent Bob Sievers commented on Albino's leadership style: "She is not a 'good-old boy,' and she will not be a 'good-old boy.' The time has moved beyond the Gordon Gee (former President of the University of Colorado) 'slap-em-on-the-back-and-keep-'em-all happy' approach."

Sports imagery can also be considered a reference to male-gendered activity, and was also used to describe leadership. The *News* quoted another Albino supporter, Regent David Winn, who said, "The Boulder problem has been reduced to a fire the coach or the great team dies" (1/21).

While the *Post* made no overt reference to gender as an issue pertinent to the administrative problems during the designated time of the study, one article highlighted a gender-related issue. In a story on January 21, the *Post* reported that CU Law graduate Daisy Curry spoke on Albino's

behalf. The reporter noted: "Curry, who also is an officer in the CU Black Alumni Association, lauded Albino's efforts on behalf of minorities and women of color."

Other examples that may be considered gender-specific references included a positive assessment of Albino's ability to control her anger (1/15), questions from reporters which probed her feelings about herself and the situation (1/20), and the discussions surrounding her inability to lead effectively (1/15, 1/17).

II. *Non-discursive analysis: Headlines*

Headlines, like photographs, provide a frame of reference for the actual discursive text, serving as a visual cues for readers. For this reason, we have included them in the discussion of the non-discursive elements of coverage.

The headlines in the *Rocky Mountain News* read:

Albino defies rebel deans
CU faculty demands Albino resign
Dissatisfaction with Albino goes right to the top

Sal Albino fights to save wife's job
CU chief's husband calls for healing

Law dean warns of chaos at CU
CU firings would bring ruin, dean says
Blame CU regents for picking Albino

Legislators call hearing on CU
Legislators summon regents to hearing
Nobel winner Cech on fence about Albino
CU'S INSURGENT DEANS

CU nears deal to oust Albino
Albino close to resignation?
Agreement near on deal for Albino to quit
It's gender issue, legislator says

Albino hangs on by the skin of her teeth
More than 30 put in their 2 cents at regents' meeting
Talk turns tough at CU regent hearing

Albino is constructed as an active agent in only three of the headlines--one of which is formed as a question ("Albino close to resignation?"). In the other two she is defiant ("Albino defies rebel deans"), and unflatteringly depicted as "hanging on by the skin of her teeth." Her

husband Sal is also the subject of two headlines. He is portrayed as peace-keeper and protector of his wife ("Sal Albino fights to save wife's job," and "CU chief's husband calls for healing"). The regents, deans, and faculty make up the majority of the headlines, and as mentioned above, only one headline directly posits the crisis as a gender issue ("It's gender issue, legislator says").

The headlines evolve from "demands of resignation" to a "deal to oust Albino." In perusing the headlines alone, Albino is clearly cast as the source of the crisis. The dean of law foresees "chaos," and even a Nobel winner is "on the fence." Albino's only overt support would appear to be coming from her husband. There is clearly crisis, and while we can "blame the regents for hiring her," Albino is its source. The conclusion framed by the headlines might read: Albino must go or the university will suffer. The only remaining question posed is how close is she to resigning. (Incidentally, the stories chronicle her refusal to resign).

Turning to the *Daily Camera* headlines:

Conciliation unlikely in CU civil war

University conflict intensifies
President's husband an unpaid employee

Showdown over Albino looms

Lawmakers: CU must halt 'the bleeding'
Regents told to halt 'bleeding' at CU
Regents told 'surgery' may be needed
Showdown at the CU corral
Albino foes taking complaints to regents
Some regents seek solution, but no deals have been struck

Albino wins 5-4
Marathon debate lasts for hours
CU's Albino survives on 5-4 vote
Quotes from the Albino debate

The *Camera* headlines emphasize crisis and conflict more than key players. Two conflicting headlines state that Albino "wins" and "survives" ("Albino wins 5-4," and "CU's Albino survives on 5-4 vote"). Once again, the president's husband is the subject of a story and headline ("President's husband an unpaid employee"). The Deans and faculty are not directly mentioned in any of the headlines--though one indirectly labels them as foes ("Albino foes taking

complaints to regents"). The regents are clearly the powerful group as they are called on to mediate and heal the wounds of conflict.

Thus, the conflict becomes the focus of the headlines. In reading the headlines as narrative, readers can trace the actual unfolding of primary and judiciary events. Aside from Albino herself, the primary players are groups: the president, her foes, and the regents.

It is important to point out here that the smaller number of *Camera* headlines is in part because of format (the *News*'s tabloid format includes front-page headlines, refer headlines, and actual story headlines), and also due to the repetition of headlines in jump stories.

Finally, the *Post* featured the following headlines during the week of our analysis:

Albino turns back foes at CU
Albino assails resignation call

Albino: My fate not top concern: CU chief a fighter, but will she prevail?
CU's Albino a fighter, but will she be a survivor?

Albino again asked to resign: Attempt at new dialogue falls flat

Students get voice in Albino tiff: CU regents' meeting is opened to public

Albino controversy takes peaceful turn
Regents support legislators' call for CU peace

Regents stand by Albino: Resignation move rejected by 5-4 vote
Albino opponents, supporters speak out emotionally

A gender-specific characteristic of Albino's portrayal in the *Post* appears in an analysis of the story headlines. Albino, who in the *Post*"s first story appeared in control ("Albino turns back foes at CU"), is presented as self-sacrificial in the next day's headline ("Albino: My fate not top concern"). This language is consistent with the ideology of women as longsuffering servants to the larger cause, and portrays Albino as a martyr in a system that is more important than her personal fate.

In the *Post* headlines, Albino is the primary actor in warlike imagery as she "turns back foes," "assails" resignation, and is described as "a fighter." In the final two stories, the Regents are the primary actors as peacemakers as they "support legislators' call for peace," and "stand by

Albino." Thus in the *Post*, Albino is portrayed as more active and central, inviting the reader to identify with her rather than with her "foes."

*Non-discursive analysis: Visual portrayals*

A comparison of the photographs run in the three papers sheds additional light on the stories and the actors, as an analysis of Albino's depictions testifies.

The first several days of the *Rocky Mountain News* sample carried the same picture of Albino. Best described as a perplexed mug shot, the image is a bust shot of a neatly coifed Albino wearing a large broach, large earrings, without her glasses, and looking confused. Two other pictures of her were used when mediation went to the regents. Both are close-ups in which her chin rests in the palm of her left hand, clearly displaying her wedding ring. In one of the photographs she wears her glasses and looks amused and smug. In the other her glasses are off and she looks worried and contemplative. The final photograph from the day of the regents' vote shows Albino (with glasses) supporting her down-turned head in her clasped hands. She almost looks asleep, or as if she is praying. She is alone in every photograph and they are all close-framed--she (her head or body) is entirely framed within the photo and there are no other people entering the photograph from any of its sides.

The *Daily Camera* ran three photographs of Albino in the timeframe of our sample. All photos in the *Camera* had accompanying subtitles. "Embattled President" is a photo of Albino sitting at a desk with her fist resting on her cheekbone. Her glasses are off and she looks blankly into space. "Survives" has her with her head slightly tilted to the left, wearing her glasses, and looking rather exhausted. "Opening the Debate" is the only photograph showing someone else in the frame. Albino sits next to supporter regent David Winn as he addresses the crowd. Albino listens intently, in this the only photograph showing the object and direction of her gaze.

During the designated week of the study, the *Post* provided four photos of Albino. Her first photo is flattering, presenting her as intense and conscientious, appropriately accompanying the story's headline: "Albino: My fate not top concern." She is not looking directly at the camera

but appears to be involved in discussion with someone. She is professionally dressed and is by herself in this photo. As the story jumps, an equally appealing second photo of Albino captures her as she "makes a point," as the photo caption reads. Again, she is engaged in dialogue and not looking directly at the camera. Two people in the background, a man and then-Chairwoman Kathy Arnold, have their attention focused on Albino. Both of them are dressed professionally, and appear to agree with what Albino is saying. The caption notes that the photo was taken during a 1992 meeting with the Regents.

Albino is pictured smiling and confident in the third *Post* photo, which accompanies the story titled: "Students get voice in Albino tiff: CU regents' meeting is opened to public." Seated behind a microphone, she smiles directly at the camera.

Albino's fourth photo is the central image of three front-page photos on the final day of our study, when the controversy was halted at least temporarily by the Regents' rejection of the call to resignation by the deans and faculty members. The photo is placed next to the headline: "Regents stand by Albino: Resignation move rejected by 5-4 vote." Albino is pictured by herself, looking intent, stern, and tired. This is the only *Post* photo in which Albino is wearing glasses.

An analysis of the two front-page photos in the *Post* which are next to Albino's photo demonstrates the way in which the other actors in the story are depicted by this paper. One photo is of five male faculty members seated on the floor. Two of the five men in the photo appear to look in the same direction; both look bored. The man in the middle is writing notes, the next man (dean Nichol of the law school) looks annoyed and is gazing in the opposite direction, and the last man is reading a newspaper. The photo's composition tells the reader that the faculty members are less important than the three male Regents pictured in the same sized photo below. These men are seated behind a table mounted with microphones. Four cameras and three male camera operators are standing behind the Regents. Two of the three men appear to be consulting one another while the third looks on. The deans also appear less important than Albino, whose photo is situated between the two lines of the headline. Consistent with the discursive analysis of the *Post* , Albino is the key actor with whom the reader is visually invited to identify.

The *News* also ran a version of the faculty-on-the-floor photo on the final day of the study. A *Camera* photo of the faculty members seated on the floor, only slightly different from the *Post* and *News* photos mentioned above, is accompanied by the caption, "Sought Albino's Resignation."

As noted earlier, news discourse in the *Camera* focused on conflicts. Appropriate to this theme, a meeting between the CU Board of Regents and the state's Joint Budget Committee members is the subject of two photographs in the *Camera* . The first, "CU on the Table," is an omniscient perspective on the meeting. It shows an overview of a standing- room-only conference room. Interestingly, it is beneath this panopticon view that Representative Vi June became the first newsmaker to address the conflict as a gender issue. The crowd is predominantly male with few discernible female figures. Another *Camera* photograph depicts regent and Albino foe Jim Martin addressing the crowd. Of the six figures in the photograph, only one is a woman.

As few women are newsmakers in the story, "In the Minority" is an ironic caption which accompanies the *Camera* photograph of the three male regents arguing for Albino's resignation. They are pictured at a conference table with a group of television camera*men* behind them recording the action. Missing from the "minority" photograph is Regent Kathy Arnold, the fourth - and female - member of the opposition.

The *News* includes one headshot of Sal Albino and a series of headshots of the deans and regents accompanying their brief biographies. In this paper, Dean Nichol of the law school is seen in three photos. In the first photo, he looks sideways and wields his arm as if caught off-guard and fending off an attack. The second is a copy of this photo, roughly four times larger than the photograph of Albino which ran on the same page. Nichol is also depicted seated on the floor with other faculty members in the photo mentioned earlier.

All three photos of Nichol in the *News* show him accompanied by at least one other man. There are no women in any of the photographs and unlike the Albino photographs in this paper, these are open-framed-- there is action partially visible from the sides of the photographs, and thus

the subject is contextualized. Similarly, each of the photographs in the *Camera* which depict men as subjects are open-framed, while Albino is often depicted by herself. Albino's photos in the *Post*, consistent with earlier analysis, are more often contextualized.

Discussion

As illustrated in our findings, gender was not defined as a key issue in the news discourse. Only the *News* allotted a separate news story which suggested gender as an issue within the story, although the claim is refuted and dismissed rather than investigated. This was also the format of the letters to the editor in the *Camera* : the first claimed gender as an issue, while the second refuted it. Thus, the discourse supported a dismissal of gender from the news agenda.

The *Post* failed to include June's reference to gender bias, yet it constructed the most sympathetic portrayal of Albino in its discourse. This is evident in the headline and image analyses above, as Albino was depicted in the *Post* as proactive and appealing in the situation rather than as the cause of conflict.

The issue of gender bias was raised each time by a woman--and each time, it was refuted by a woman. For example, both cites of Representative June's charge were refuted by Regent Kathy Arnold, who is quoted as saying: "Because I took the position I did, that doesn't mean I, as a woman, am anti-woman." Because gender bias was raised and refuted only by women, it would appear from these news reports that gender bias is an issue debatable only by women. Thus, the news discourse supported the notion that gender is a "women's issue." This is consistent with the hypothesis of Rakow and Kranich (1991) that women in news stories are seen to represent their entire sex.

Our findings supported the research of Gerbner (1993) and Betty Friedan's media watch group (1990), both of which found that women were less frequently quoted as newsmakers than men. The *Camera* report of the public meeting which ended in the regents' vote to keep Albino included a highlighted list of quotes from the debate, and provides an apt example of this phenomenon. Of the 17 quotes listed, twelve of the sources are men, two are women, and three are

identified by position alone. One of the two women is quoted only briefly and without reference to context, saying of Albino, "She cares." The dearth of women speakers served a function of symbolic annihilation (Tuchman, 1978b), both because few women's opinions were solicited and because the discussion of the gender issue itself was limited to those few women who were cited.

While overtly marginalized, the gender issue tended to enter the news discourse "through the back door," as in the case of the *News* and *Camera* discourses surrounding Judith Albino's husband, Sal. Gendering Albino by illuminating her status as wife, the story served to recuperate Albino, casting her in a more traditionally female role as the helpless wife in need of husbandly protection. This supported Kuhn's (1982) hypothesis that women in news stories are often recuperated into more traditional roles which are less threatening to the dominant values of society. The *Post* , which portrayed Albino positively, was the only paper of the three not to feature Sal Albino as the primary subject of a story.

All three papers reported that the charge against Albino was that she could not "lead effectively" --noting that specific charges against her leadership had not been made. It is important to note that this is a charge often made against women in positions of leadership (see, e.g., Kaplan and Tinsley, 1989). While she was described as an "ineffective" leader by her opponents, there is no attempt within the construction of the story to posit what an "effective" leader would do.

The issue of "effective leadership" brought forth comparisons with former CU President Gordon Gee in all three papers. The *News* and the *Post* quote State Senator Al Meikeljohn, head of the Senate Education Committee, who cites two major issues as the source of her difficulties: money and the fact that she follows Gordon Gee as president. Gee was known for his politicking with legislators, Regents, and deans. His "public relations abilities" are not matched in Albino, Meikeljohn notes. The *News* and the *Camera* both cite Sievers's "Good 'ol boy" quote. As mentioned earlier, it is difficult to distinguish the degree to which Gee's gender played a role in the personal traits which made him an "effective leader" in contrast to Albino.

However, the non-discursive elements of the headline and photograph analyses function as "ruptures" in the text, suggesting an alternative explanation for Albino's perception as an ineffective leader. As Kuhn (1982) suggested, "ruptures" in the text provide points at which the text can be read as revealing those very aspects which it tries to make invisible - in this case, the relevance of gender to the conflict. Significantly, all three papers included close-framed images of Albino and open-framed images of the regents and deans. The *News* and the *Camera* consistently showed Albino alone, leaving the reader unable to infer the direction or context of her gazes. Meanwhile, the photographs of men generally focused on groups. The photos lead one to the conclusion that Albino had no supporters and few relationships. As Kenner-Varner (1992) suggested, evaluations of effective leadership are often based upon relationships, not skills. Kenner-Varner highlighted the importance of comfortable working and social relationships between employees and those who hire them. She noted a systemic difficulty encountered by women in upper management positions: because few women are in upper management, few men are comfortable working with them. Unlike Churgin (1978) and Kaplan and Tinsley (1989), Kenner-Varner 's hypothesis is consistent with that of Mann and Smith (1990) and with the research of the American Human Management Association (1992), each of which suggested that bias is systemic and therefore is a problem that cannot be dismissed as one individual's failure or lack of certain qualifications.

Thus, the problems Albino faced - and continues to face - are indicative of deeper, systemic issues facing women in leadership positions - issues which must be addressed, as Taylor (1989) suggested, at all levels of responsibility within organizations. The discourse expressed through the mass mediated messages served to reflect dominant societal values, upholding frameworks of individual responsibility rather than systemic bias to explain the conflict.

Conclusion

A central finding of this analysis is that gender, when not investigated directly, enters the news discourse "through the back door." This is consistent with Kuhn's (1982) idea of rupture in the text. While the narrative discourse excluded or quickly dismissed gender, the headlines and photos rupture the consistency - she was depicted alone and was cast as a nonactive agent in the story. The rupture illustrated the conflict's central problem of relationship. Like other women leaders in higher education, perhaps Albino's "ineffective leadership" was not related to a lack of skills but to a lack of relationships, or at least relationships with "players" in the conflict.

As noted earlier, statistics have demonstrated that the number of women in top positions in universities is low and moreover, there has not been much improvement in the past twenty years. Therefore, the appointment of Judith Albino to the position of president at a major public university was newsworthy by virtue of its rarity. While her gender contributed to the newsworthiness of the story at the time of her appointment, it was not considered a newsworthy element at the time of the call for her resignation.

Based upon the analysis of the particular week of study, it is clear that gender is not a category overtly explored in the analysis of power and politics in the news. In their own defense, reporters might contend that they did not posit gender as a primary news issue because few newsmakers cast the conflict in such terms. This may have occurred because the newsmakers wanted to avoid legitimizing the gender discourse, or because they do not acknowledge gender as an important aspect of power distribution in society. The lack of gender analysis on the part of reporters may demonstrate, as Tuchman (1978a) suggested, that gender is outside the purview of the news's "web of facticity." Therefore, like the newsmakers, reporters may not see gender analysis as a legitimate way in which to investigate power distribution. In any case, one is left with the questions: why is gender not an appropriate topic for discussion by newsmakers, and why is it acceptable for journalists to fail to account for it in analysis of power relations?

As Fiske (1987) wrote, discourse exists prior to an individual account, forcing news events to be seen within a preexisting framework of interpretation. The fact that gender is removed from the news discourse in this case indicates that gender is not generally accepted as an explanation for power differentials in society, and possibly, some individuals benefit from the suppression of gender analysis. Until the political implications of gender are understood and thus the metadiscourse around gender is altered, journalists and newsmakers can be expected to look for explanations based upon individual traits rather than seeking systemic causes for conflict. However, challenges to this individualized viewpoint can be expected to surface through the ruptures in the mediated texts, as was the case in the coverage of Judith Albino.

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